

## Pike/Pine Planning Study, 1991

### History

The Pike/Pine Planning Study **was the** result of a two-year, community initiated planning process supported by Capitol Hill community groups, volunteers from the community at-large, and the City of Seattle's Neighborhood Matching Fund. The boundaries of the study area were the same as the current boundaries of the Pike/Pine Urban Center Village.

The 1991 study was guided by a diverse steering committee, bound together by a common feeling that the Pike/Pine neighborhood would experience significant change over the next **10** years. The participants viewed their efforts as an experiment in community based neighborhood planning. The recommendations in the study were drafted as efforts to encourage the positive elements in the area, providing clarity and direction for economic and Social forces already at work in the neighborhood.

The study also took into account the needs of the broader community and the neighborhood's role in furthering city policies and long term planning for the region. This is shown in the study's emphasis on a future in which the neighborhood supports a dense population enjoying moderately priced housing close to employment and transportation.

During research for information on the Pike/Pine neighborhood for the 1991 study, previous projects were discovered that addressed issues in the area. In the late 1970s there was a flurry of public **and** private activity centered on the Pike/Pine area. In 1976, the Seattle Engineering Department spent **\$1,062,000** to upgrade Pike and Pine Streets from First Avenue to E Madison Street. The improvements included street trees, lighting improvements, and crosswalks.

In 1977 a group called the Pike/Pine Improvement Club applied for a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, to promote the area as having "lively service oriented amenities essential to a stable neighborhood." The goals of the grant application were strangely similar to those of the 1991 Pike/Pine Planning Study and to this neighborhood planning effort twenty years later:

- Urban design guidelines for future growth and control of new development
- Guidelines for reuse of significant structures of landmark quality
- Developments which will encourage a joint private/public venture to revitalize the area
- Develop a program which promotes new development and the economic vitality of the area

As far as is known, the NEA grant application was not funded. However, in May of 1977, a different group sponsored by the Capitol Hill Community Council and the Northwest Regional Foundation formulated and distributed a questionnaire to 5,800 residents of Southwest Capitol Hill. Their boundaries covered the area bounded by 1-5, E. Aloha, 15th Ave, and E. Pike. Although this survey covered a larger area than current planning boundaries, many of the opinions were very similar to those collected by the University of Washington class' 1989 attitude survey of Pike/Pine residents.



In 1979 the Capitol Hill Community Council created a Southwest Capitol Hill Task Force, (SWCHTF) to organize residents to address gentrification of the area's housing and businesses. The boundaries of this project were from Denny Way to Union, between I-5 and Broadway. With funding from Title I for several community organizers, and the assistance of University of Washington and Seattle University, area residents--who were perceived to be primarily low-income--were organized to form the Southwest Capitol Hill Neighborhood Council. The group was never formally incorporated because they were a committee of the larger Capitol Hill Community Council. The impetus for the SWCHTF was a local lay minister whose primary concern was the displacement of low-income tenants and businesses that served them. The SWCHTF produced a survey and several reports on business and community issues, but no known action followed their intensive study of the area.

In 1988, a loosely knit group of 23 businesses and property owners formed the West Capitol Hill Improvement Association, primarily to combat a marked increase in drug abuse, prostitution, littering and loitering. The boundaries they used to identify their group were: I-5 on the west, East Denny Way on the north, Broadway on the east, and E. Union on the south. Although there was support from members to form an association, it appears that the group stopped meeting regularly, either because of a lack of leadership or due to a drop in the crime problems.

### Goals and Objectives of the 1991 Planning Study

- Maintain and improve the economic vitality of the area by encouraging development in context with the existing neighborhood and its present uses.
- Preserve existing low-income housing in the area.
- Create a better environment for existing businesses by addressing key issues such as parking and public safety.
- Present the area to public officials as vital to the City of Seattle because of its centrally located housing, commercial and transportation resources. Guide and assist policy makers to provide some direction for the area's future by recommending coherent and contextual strategies.
- Create a baseline of comprehensive data that is available to the community, exceeding current information available in other public records. Encourage the community to make informed decisions **based on a reliable** source of information.

### Recommendations of the 1991 Planning Study

The Pike/Pine Planning Study addressed five essential issues: land use, housing, commercial activity, crime **and** security, and parking. The Steering Committee recognized that the success of the study relied on two things: the willingness of city officials to take appropriate actions based on the study, and the continuing involvement of the community to maintain the vitality of the neighborhood. Therefore, the recommendations of the study are for action by both the city and community organizations.

### Recommendations for Action by Community Organizations and Institutions

There were a number of recommendations in the 1991 Plan addressed to existing or future community organizations and institutions. These recommendations relate to housing, commercial activity, crime and security issues, and parking.

### Housing:

- Encourage local employers and institutions to create innovative benefit structures that include “**employer-assisted housing programs**” where employee benefits include financial assistance for housing costs.
- **Establish a Pike/Pine Housing Task Force** in coordination with a city department to monitor and report on rental levels, demolitions and conversions of housing units.

### Commercial Activity

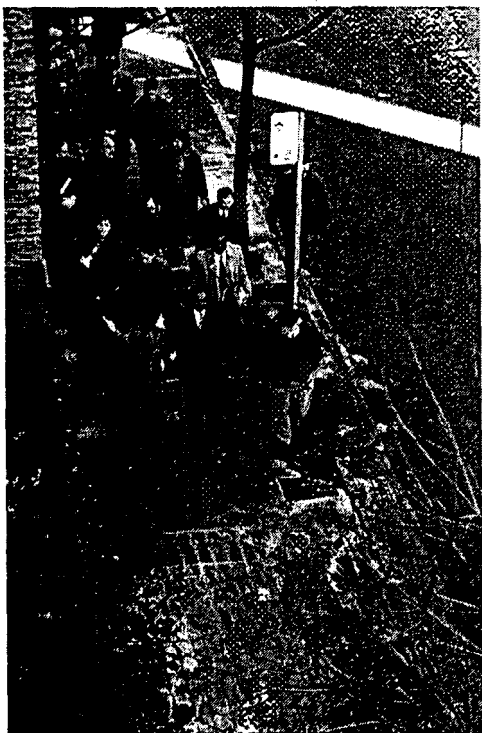
- Encourage business ridesharing programs and sponsorship of bus passes.
- Develop a business association that will express the entire district’s opinions on public services.
- Increase membership in Capitol Hill Chamber of Commerce or Greater Seattle Business Association.
- Encourage development of a Pike/Pine business community with flags, street cleaning, or block watch, to promote businesses and create a more positive atmosphere for customers and employees in the area.

### Crime and Safety

- Encourage business and community members to participate in existing community organizations.
- Form a Crime Prevention Task Force to create a “Security Action Plan” to prioritize security needs for the area..
- Support the “Capitol Hill Declaration of Community Commitment” which states intolerance to hate crimes and harassment of community members.

### Parking

- Encourage expansion of the Seattle Central Community College (SCCC) parking garage from 500 to 750 spaces.
- Encourage an aggressive **carpool** (ridesharing) program for SCCC.
- Encourage a better understanding of employee parking locations with employer-sponsored parking areas and/or bus passes.



Pike/Pine Urban Center Village  
Draft Neighborhood Plan

### **Recommendations for Action by the City**

The Steering Committee recognized that successful implementation of the 1991 Study would require a commitment by the City in both policy and legislative actions, and capital expenditures. Listed below is the summary of recommendations for City action.

- Create an Urban Neighborhood Overlay to direct reinvestment and provide incentives to produce below-market rental units.
- Attach design guidelines to initial correspondence with all Master Use Permit applications.
- Encourage pedestrian use with improvements to the streetscape: curb bulbs, enhanced crosswalks and **traffic** lights,
- Assign priority to the Pike/Pine area for the Multifamily Code repair program for apartment buildings.

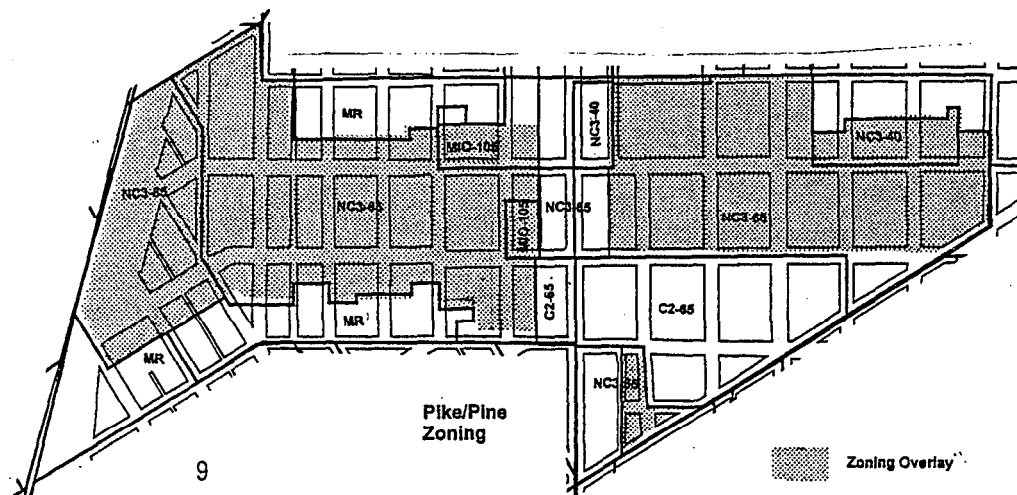
- Establish a Pike/Pine Housing Fund and give priority status to the Pike/Pine area for various other city housing funds.
- Extend fee exemptions of the Rental Housing Inspection Program (RHIP) to all low-income units.
- Explore **first-time** homeowner assistance for multifamily units (condominiums or cooperatives).
- Encourage employer-assisted housing in the Pike/Pine neighborhood.
- Coordinate regulatory policies between departments.
- Reduce utility rates for multifamily buildings in which a majority of units are occupied by households whose household income is below 50% of the median.
- Establish a Pike/Pine Housing Task Force.
- **Initiate** Detox Van service east of I-5.
- Allow SCCC to expand their parking garage from 500 to 750 spaces.
- Explore one-way couplets on selected north-south streets, with back-in angle parking to increase number of on-street parking spaces.
- Improve management of existing on-street parking.
- Tie the area into METRO planning for its envisioned rapid-transit tunnel. Obtain an understanding of current demands for parking in the area prior to any major transportation projects through the area.
- Improve transit services to and from SCCC to relieve students from time-consuming transfers. Target SCCC staff and faculty for an aggressive ridesharing program.

## The Pike/Pine Overlay

The recommendation to create an Urban Neighborhood Overlay was the most **comprehensive** of all the recommendations in the 1991 Study. The NC3 zoning in effect at the time of the study was considered, in most respects, appropriate for the area. However, by being broadly permissive in terms of allowable uses, the NC3 zone provided almost no meaningful direction for future investments in **the** area. The Steering Committee felt that the NC3 zoning, coupled with the exceptional diversity of existing uses, was probably hindering housing reinvestment, rather than fostering constructive development.

To counter this problem, the adoption of an "Urban Neighborhood Overlay" was recommended. The overlay would leave the basic zoning unchanged but would designate the area as one intended to become a denser urban neighborhood with commercial uses at the street level and residential uses above. The basic tenets of the overlay recommendation included:

- All parcels in the study area which are zoned NC shall be subjected to an 'Urban Neighborhood' overlay, EXCEPT those parcels with frontage on Broadway.
- The Urban Neighborhood designation shall require that all new construction greater than 30' in height have no more than **50** % of floor space, but in no case more than two full floors, intended for commercial use.
- Parcels fronting on the north-south streets bounded by E. Union on the South, E. Olive on the north, I-5 on the west, and Broadway on the east, MAY BE EXEMPTED from the requirement for ground-floor commercial space provided that 10% (or at least one unit) of the residential units are affordable to low-income households. Where below-market units are part of a new building, design requirements for single-use residential construction on these sites shall be those defined for Mid-Rise zones EXCEPT that developers may choose to build the **first** story to the front and side lot lines provided that an additional number of affordable units are included. These privately constructed and managed low-income units would be monitored by DCD to insure compliance for 20 years with affordability standards for households earning less than 50% of the **Seattle- Everett** median income.
- Rehabilitation of existing residential units shall not reduce the square footage available for residents except that ground floor apartments MAY BE ELIMINATED to provide commercial space.
- A density of one unit per 400 square feet of lot area is permitted.
- Rehabilitation of existing structures with no residential units shall be permitted without requiring the addition of residential units.
- Drive-in businesses as defined in Section 23844.008 of the zoning code shall not be permitted.



# Pike Pine Urban Center Village Neighborhood Plan, Phase I

## Organizing

When the Neighborhood Planning-Office (NPO) came to the neighborhood in 1995, they found one small group of neighborhood activists in the Pike/Pine Neighborhood Association and another that had coalesced around a project to develop a series of curb bulbs with money from the Street Utilities Fund and through a Department of Neighborhoods matching grant.

Soon a core group was talking with the NPO and learning about the terminology and format of Seattle's new Neighborhood Planning Process. For those community members who became interested, late 1995 and early 1996 became an exercise in learning a new language. They learned about how to assemble an Organizing Committee that would identify *stakeholders* and plan a Phase One Planning Scope of Work. They learned that in Phase 1, they would develop a vision and *goals* for their neighborhood and that they would need to do *outreach* so that their vision and goals would be representative and could be *validated*. Then they would need to assemble a Planning Committee that would plan a Phase Two Scope of Work that would generate a Neighborhood Plan.

Around this same time, one very successful effort toward planning in the neighborhood was initiated by architect Anne Van Dyne. Anne organized a neighborhood planning charette that brought together design professionals and other interested neighbors in a day-long forum and a number of small-group design workshops. The event, called "Building an Urban Village from the Inside-Out," took place on November 11, 1995. By the end of the day-long charette there were four innovative approaches to neighborhood design challenges. It was evident that Pike/Pine was embracing the term "urban village" and its implications of mixed uses, strong self-identity, and diversity combined with closeness. The Pike/Pine neighborhood saw itself not just as a corridor that straddles First Hill and Capitol Hill, but as a distinct area with its own identity.

Meanwhile, members of the former Pike/Pine Neighborhood Association had become familiar with planning activities that had taken place in Pike/Pine's recent past, including The 1991 Pike/Pine Planning Study. Although the community volunteers who had helped put together the 1991 study were no longer involved in Pike/Pine planning, the newer group was impressed by the breadth and thoroughness of their work, and decided to make its findings the core of their efforts. It was around this time (early 1996) that the City Council approved and adopted the Pike/Pine Zoning Overlay for the Pike/Pine neighborhood as a direct outgrowth of the 1991 Pike/Pine Planning Study.

Building on the momentum from the design charette, the new group worked with the Neighborhood Planning Office to put together a neighborhood meeting to raise people's interest in the planning process. The meeting, held on November 29, 1995.



Thirty-two people attended the meeting and it became apparent that people cared about the Pike/Pine Neighborhood and felt passionate about its future. At the meeting a model was presented regarding how to organize an active neighborhood association at the same time neighborhood planning is underway. Based on that model, a group began meeting that within a couple of months had developed by-laws and had given itself a name: the Pike/Pine Urban Neighborhood Coalition, or PIPUNC.

A second outcome of the November 29<sup>th</sup>, 1995 meeting was the formation of the Pike/Pine Neighborhood Planning Organizing Committee, a group committed to developing a scope of work for Phase One neighborhood planning. The attendees at the meeting created a list of neighborhood stakeholders that the Organizing Committee would be charged with reaching out to in Phase One planning.

## Outreach

The goal of the Phase One planning effort was to engage as many neighborhood people as possible in identifying a future vision for Pike/Pine. To accomplish this goal, the organizing committee developed an array of activities as varied as Pike/Pine itself.

The Organizing Committee agreed on the following fundamental principles to guide the Phase One effort:

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### Tenets of Pike/Pine Planning

- . Our planning is driven by the community
  - We work with the 1991 Pike/Pine Neighborhood Study as a base
  - . We focus on planning and projects at the same time, so that we can see our efforts have real results
  - We plan with a human face--we are inclusive and friendly in our efforts
  - We think an inventive and creative approach to planning is positive
  - . The process of community involvement is as important as the product
  - . True--rather than token--community involvement can be of lasting value
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The Organizing Committee decided to divide into four project teams, each of which would be responsible for a specific outreach activity. The Committee chose this process because it could be implemented by volunteers. Each project had its own budget and volunteer committee. Consultants were hired for certain tasks within each project.

Team One was responsible for Background Documentation. The purpose of this effort was to ensure that the community was informed about past planning projects so that current planning could build on those efforts. Team

One compiled a directory of existing resources and data; reviewed the city's Comprehensive Plan; produce a Pike/Pine slide show and text, and; gathered together a set of presentation maps that illustrate the composition of the neighborhood.



Team Two prepared questions relating to Pike/Pine that were included in a telephone survey being conducted by the Broadway Business Improvement Association.

Team Three sponsored two focus groups; one each for residents and business interests. Team Three members facilitated the focus groups which were in the form of informal, idea-oriented "round table" discussions.

Team Four conducted a Youth Needs Assessment that involved involving students in documenting their views of the strengths and weaknesses of the Pike/Pine neighborhood.

The outreach strategies brought in traditionally underrepresented populations. Area youth were included through the youth needs assessment carried out by students from the Northwest School and Seattle Arts Academy. Residents were specifically targeted in the focus groups and the survey. Area businesses were specifically targeted in the focus groups. In addition, all activities were publicized and held in an open and inclusive manner.

An additional, and very productive, outreach activity was a charette held at the University of Washington entitled "*Containment/Continuum: The Pike/Pine Corridor Transition Between Downtown and the Neighborhood*".

Each year NIAUSI and the University of Washington cosponsor a charette that advances creative, feasible solutions to real urban design problems of social, civic and environmental importance. Although this activity was not included in our Phase One Scope of Work, Organizing Committee member (and NIAUSI Board member) Jon Adkins took the initiative in getting NIAUSI and the University of Washington to focus their 1996 charette on the Pike/Pine neighborhood. **Undergraduates**, graduate students, and faculty members in architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning collaborated in teams that tackled specific design questions relevant to the neighborhood. The charette, which involved work until sunrise for many of the participants produced varied solutions to the question of how the Pike/Pine neighborhood can be maintained with its stability and cherished eccentricities while acknowledging its increasingly important--but threatening--connection to the Seattle downtown center. Visual documents and text descriptions were presented by students at an open public forum held at the University of Washington on March 27, 1996.

### Developing and Validating the Neighborhood's Vision and Goals

After conducting these various outreach activities, the Organizing Committee set about synthesizing the diverse input it had received. This effort took place in five stages.

In the first stage, the Organizing Committee, with facilitation by NPO, participated in a workshop where they grouped and named the various ideas, suggestions and comments received through outreach into working issue categories.

Next, the project manager from NPO drafted a vision, goals and a preliminary scope of work based on the results of the workshop and the findings from each of the outreach activities. Members of the Organizing Committee reviewed and added to this first draft.

In the third stage, the Organizing Committee organized a luncheon for key neighborhood stakeholders to review, comment and add the draft vision, goals and scope of work. The lively discussion affirmed the vision statement and the direction of the scope of work, and generated new ideas for accomplishing many of the stated goals.



Next, a flyer was developed and mailed to 5000 addresses in the Pike/Pine neighborhood that announced a Validation Event scheduled for March 15, 1997. The mailer included a survey asking for feedback on the draft vision and goals.

Finally, on March 15<sup>th</sup>, a community-wide Validation Event was held inside a vacant storefront at the corner of East Pike Street and **Melrose** Avenue. Participants had opportunities to submit comments and to prioritize the issues they cared most about. Comments received during the Validation Event were incorporated into the final Phase Two Scope of Work.

## Goals for Phase Two Planning

- Strengthen the neighborhood's existing mixed-use character
  - Encourage additional affordable and market rate housing growth in order to increase the number of residents living in the Pike/Pine neighborhood
  - Welcome increased residential densities with an understanding that new residents are drawn to the neighborhood by existing conditions; Pike/Pine should not become 'sanitized' to mimic a non-urban environment
  - Preserve and encourage the existing mix of light manufacturing, wholesaling, high-tech and auto-related businesses that presently coexist with smaller retailers
  - Encourage the growth and stability of retail businesses that serve neighborhood resident's daily needs, such as hardware stores, grocers, pharmacies, etc.
  - Increase housing, studio, performance and gallery spaces that allow musicians and artists to live, work and thrive in the neighborhood
  - Preserve, to the extent possible, the neighborhood's built environment of auto-row architecture
  - Enhance sidewalks and alleys to make a better overall pedestrian environment for pedestrian and retail activities, such as sidewalk cafes, and to provide more greenery
  - Enhance available open space and support the search for additional 'pocket park' space for community gardens, children's play space and other recreational opportunities
  - Promote community building and a concern for the social service needs of area residents and businesses
  - Continue development of a neighborhood self-consciousness and self-identity that will allow it to continue to recognize its distinctive elements worth preserving
  - Nurture the Pike/Pine Urban Neighborhood Coalition in order to strengthen neighborhood identity, forge alliances between business people and residents, and help the neighborhood respond to change and growth
  - Discover ways to meet the Comp Plan land use goals (620 households and 1400 jobs) that fulfill Pike/Pine's version of mixed-use development
-